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# THE HOUSE

## CONCERNING HALLS AND DINING-ROOMS.

THESE is no one point in which a modern American city house departs further from the practice and the ideas of say fifty years ago than in the relation of the semi-public to the more domestic part, of that in which appearances are most consulted to that in which

the occupant most entirely suits himself; or, let us put it concretely, and say, of the hall to the dining-room. We every now and then find some writer inveigh against the luxurious appointments of modern city dwellings, the color, the gilding, the rich stuffs and materials, the rarities and works of art that almost overflow on the sidewalk. If this is contrasted with the cold and barren magnificence of our older houses, it is generally with a feeling that the latter are more democratic, or, at least, more republican. Nothing can well be further from the truth. Our modern dwellings, in which the hall is as comfortable as the dining-room, and leads directly to it, are the expression of a more democratic feeling, at least, among people of wealth and refinement. Instead of indulging his private tastes in his own room only, the modern man of means displays them on the very front of his house, confident that they are such as will meet with general approval. He does not put between him and the street a broad, cold, desolate vestibule, repellent with hard marble, gilt bronze and sharp leaved plants, looking as if cut out of zinc

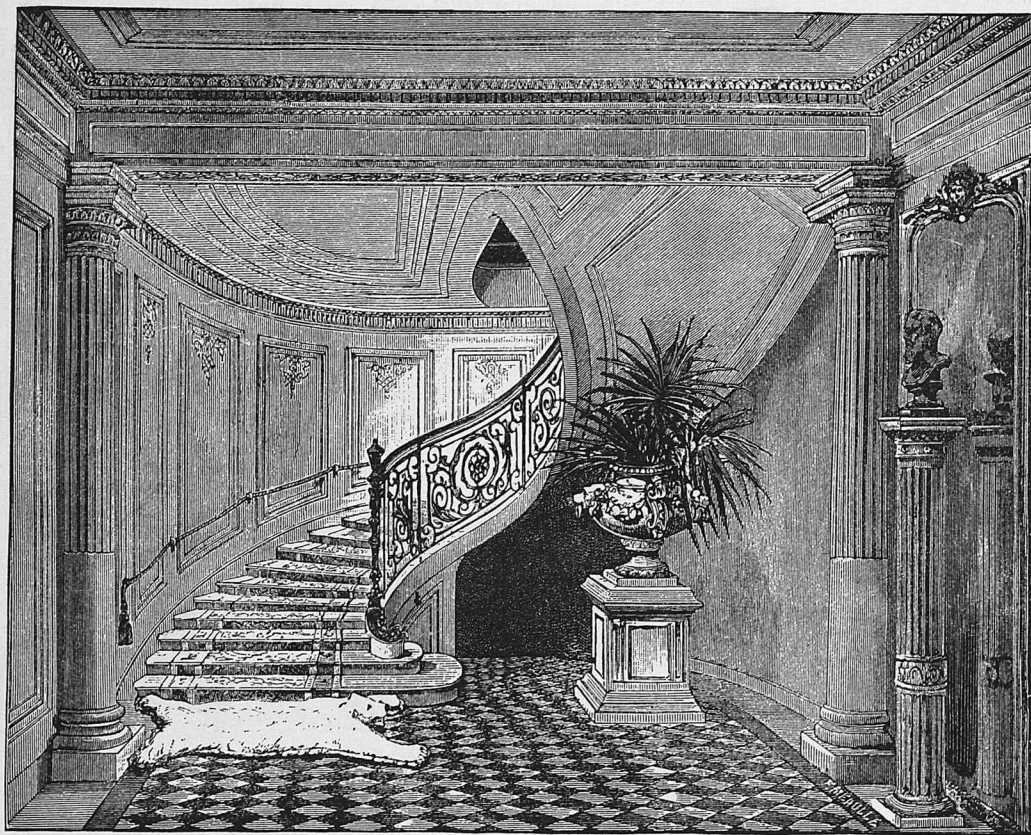
and painted. He lives right up to his stoop line, and is willing that everybody should know what things he likes and how he enjoys himself. It is true that in this way he gains immensely in comfort and in pleasure; but so do his friends and acquaintances, and so in a measurable degree do the public generally. The vestibule which we illustrate herewith will give a very good idea of the entrance to a New York house of the old style, now obsolete. Let us admit that there is a certain elegance observable in the easy curves of the staircase, in the simple panelling of the walls and the mouldings of the cornice; but the waste of space is evidently enormous, the dark hole under the stairs makes one shudder, with its suggestions of damp and dust, the proportions of beam and pillar are squat and ugly, and the general impression is that a cold welcome awaits the visitor, and that the people of the house prefer frozen dignity to their own and their guests' comfort.

Our second drawing shows the entrance hall of a modern New York house. The owner of this house is a

lover of Oriental art, and takes the public into his confidence in the matter. The rich and subdued tones of Eastern rugs and tiles and the intricacies of arabesque and Persian patterning are displayed in all the appointments. The plan of the hall and vestibule is, however, taken from French Renaissance models, and makes us acquainted with another off the owner's tastes. The handsome screen which cuts off the staircase from the hall is distinctly of fifteenth-century European treatment; yet the reader will observe that the splendid Persian rug which serves as a tapestry for one of the walls looks quite in keeping. The hall would look better if wainscoted to the top, as the ceiling cornice and that of the wainscot come too close together, and the narrow wall surface, cut into, moreover, by the door frames, looks particularly bad and is insusceptible of pleasant decoration. On the side opposite, a large register framed in rich tiles has been let into the panelling with a very happy effect. Over it is a projecting shelf for bric-à-brac. The ceiling is in square coffered panels of

and well-lit dining-room, with windows filled with stained or opalescent glass giving on the yard at the rear. The house on Madison Avenue, in which is the dining-room which we illustrate, is large for New York, having double the ordinary frontage. It is throughout treated in the semi-baronial style shown in our drawing, and oaken chests, carved Caen stone and stained-glass windows abound in all parts of it. The dining-room is about thirty feet square, and has a mahogany wainscot ten feet high. The mantel is of mahogany and terra-cotta, and the beams which support the coved ceiling are also of the Honduras wood. It opens into a conservatory at the side, not shown in our drawing. The principal feature of the room is the huge mantel rising to the ceiling, which, in appearance, it helps to support. It is in the French style of the close of the fifteenth century, in which Gothic structural forms were made to take on much Renaissance ornament. The "hutte" so-called, or sloping part of the upper mantel, by which the smoke conduit passes through or into the thickness of

the wall, was anciently the most important part of the mantel, and was accordingly treated with ornament when even the jambs or supports were left plain. A row of figures in Gothic niches in many old mantels of this type takes the place of the band of terra-cotta grapevine decoration in our drawing; and the tiles of the slanting part were cut in a great variety of forms. The mantel in our drawing may therefore be taken as giving the general outline of a type of construction which lends itself to several quite different kinds of decoration. On either side the mantel will be observed fluted pilasters of mahogany, harmonizing by their rich color with the terra-cotta, and carrying out the idea of the whole structure being a supporting member in the construction of the room. A band of carving catches up



OLD-FASHIONED VESTIBULE AND STAIRCASE.

dark wood, left severely plain, while the under surface of the staircase, showing through the openings of the hall screen, are painted in smaller squares, with a golden disk in the centre of each. The furniture of the hall includes a stuffed leather bench placed against the spindle work panels of the lower part of the screen, a long inlaid table and some chairs. The general effect is inviting, comfortable and homelike, and puts the visitor at once at his ease. Here are no repellent surfaces, no meaningless assumption of a style suited only to public buildings or the palaces of kings and princes. We are not confronted by another closed door opening, in the good old fashion, on a long, musty and gloomy corridor, or inner hall, off which opens the gloomy parlors, never used, and the still gloomier dining-room, which it must have taken any number of lights and as many bottles to give temporarily a cheerful aspect.

In the modern house the entrance hall usually leads past the parlors into a large square hall, sometimes utilized as a family sitting-room or music-room, to a large

with the terra-cotta chimney cornice, and is in turn followed at the same level by a coved finish to the wainscot, with a rail for specimens of faience and china. A mirror is set into a little colonnade of mahogany, not quite in keeping with the early style of the whole. It suggests and might advantageously be replaced by a gilt and painted triptych. The lower mantel is unfortunately common place in design. It should have much sturdier proportions to bear the weight superimposed on it.

On either side of the mantel is a door with over shelf, bearing fine specimens of pottery, and a heavy portière of dark woollen stuff. A little cabinet projecting from the wainscot, and built permanently into it with strong supporting brackets, will be noticed to the left. It is for small bits of old china "hung up for a show." The sideboard is large, even for such a large room, and is elaborately ornamented. Its shelves are upheld by twisted pillars, and are carved with patterns of flowers and leaves. Its cupboard doors are inlaid with tiles in relief. It sets into a recess taking in the entire thickness of the



ENTRANCE HALL OF A MODERN NEW YORK HOUSE. DRAWN BY H. W. EDWARDS.

(SEE "CONCERNING HALLS AND DINING-ROOMS," PAGE 17.)

wall, and its load of rich silver and porcelain is lit by a lozenged window of opalescent glass. The little of the wall that shows above the wainscot is covered with old stamped leather of a design with flowers and fruits in various tones of golden brown, crimson and dull green. The plain, round mahogany table occupies the centre of the room. The chairs are of mahogany, with backs and seats in brown and gold stamped leather. A Turkey carpet, in which blue and red predominate, covers all but a narrow border of the waxed floor.

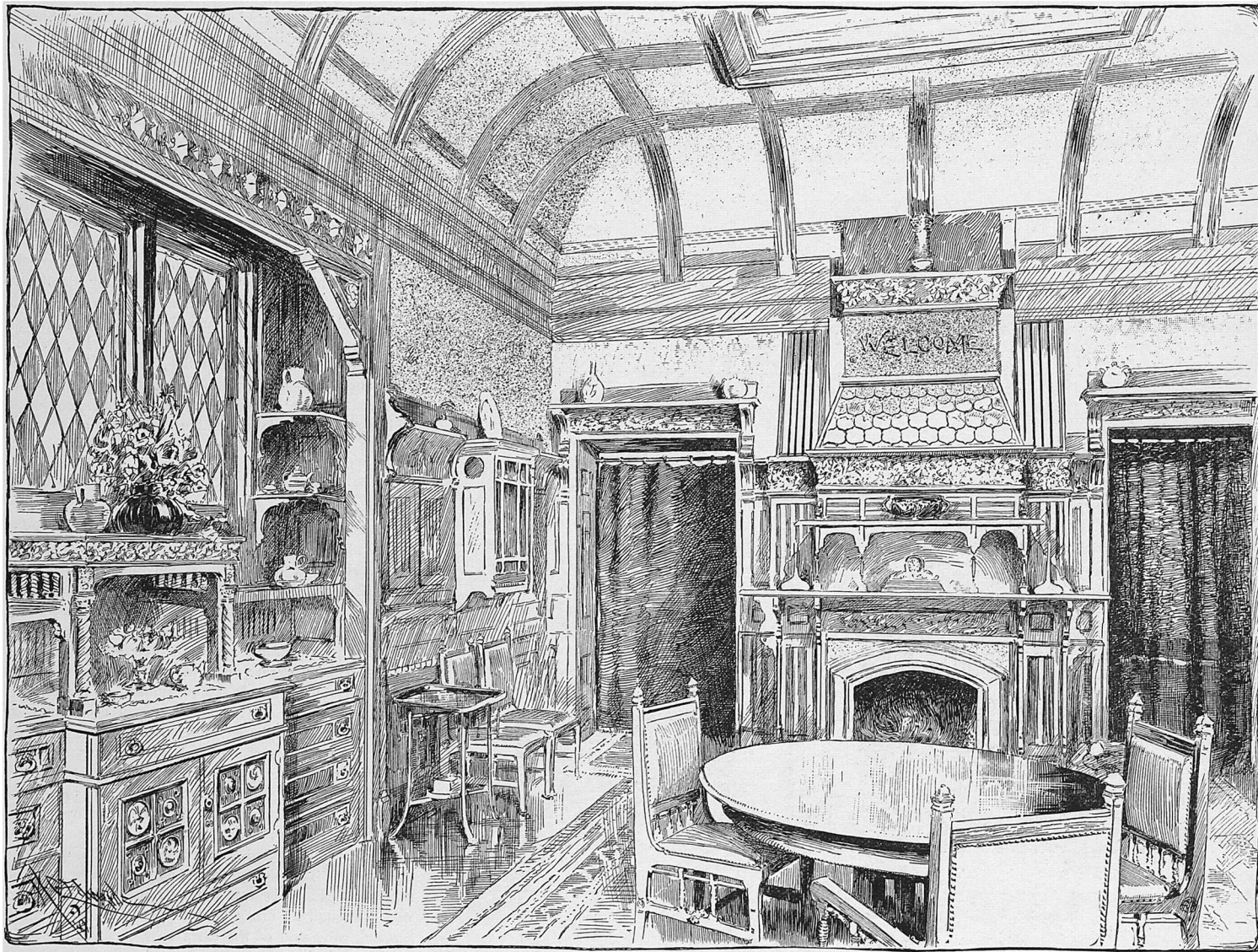
PAINTED AND STAINED WOOD-WORK is going more and more out of fashion in favor of natural woods of good color and not too great cost. Chief of these are red cedar and oak. The former may be used everywhere

ert Hoe, was illustrated in *The Art Amateur*. The interior of Mr. Hoe's armoire is probably the finer, although the marquetry on the numerous drawers of this one, illustrating the entry into Noah's Ark, is very remarkable. The outside panels, if not so interesting in design as those of the Hoe cabinet, are in better condition; the six twisted front legs supporting the armoire proper are richly and artistically carved.

#### HAVARD'S DICTIONARY OF FURNITURE.

THE "Dictionnaire de l'Ameublement et de la Decoration" of M. H. Havard (New York, Bouton) has now reached the third volume, including letters I to O, and in the variety of matters treated, the learning dis-

medallion of Cupid and Psyche. The labyrinths of box and myrtle and laurel in the old gardens of Versailles, St. Omer and St. Quentin are described and illustrated with plans and views. Ancient lamps of the fourteenth to the sixteenth century offer a number of designs to the worker in brass and iron. They are in the form of doves, of boats, of a dragon with a flaming tail. There are night lamps in faience; and the student's lamp and carcel lamp in bronze bring us down to the present date. We have a print of the dairy (laiterie) of Marie Antoinette at the little Trianon, a model of simple elegance, with its tessellated marble floor, its table for cream pans, with wrought marble supports, and its basins for water in the form of shells upheld by intertwined dolphins. Apropos of this, we are told of the dairy of M. de Conde at Neuilly, all of white marble, with a



DINING-ROOM IN A MODERN NEW YORK HOUSE. DRAWN BY H. C. EDWARDS.

(SEE "CONCERNING HALLS AND DINING-ROOMS," PAGE 17.)

where neither great strength nor very neat finish is required. Its beautiful color makes it invaluable for panelling, and for mantels and shelves when the design is simple. It is said to cost considerably less than pine, but the builders make no difference in their charges. Both ordinary and Georgia pine are being less used than before; but the latter combines very well with the cedar, making, when both are liberally used, a very rich-toned interior.

A FINE and remarkably well-preserved, solid ebony cabinet, seven feet high and six wide, made—in northern Italy, probably—about the beginning of the seventeenth century, is on exhibition at Herter Brothers. It is one of those elaborately inlaid and finely carved pieces of furniture intended originally as a church armoire—an "armoire a deux corps" it would be called, in France. A similar one of about the same period, imported by this firm, a few years ago, and now owned by Mr. Rob-

played, the abundance and excellence of the illustrations, it still holds the unique position which it took at the first. Libraries, art schools, makers and designers of furniture, and private persons with large houses to furnish will find it extremely useful. To give a more definite idea of its scheme and contents, we will mention a few of the articles in this third volume. Under the head of "Toiles de Jouy," M. Havard tells us the history of the first establishment of cotton prints in France by the celebrated Oberkampf, who came from Bavaria to Jouy in 1758, and set up there his manufactory, in which he printed both from the copper plate and rollers in several colors. Of these cotton prints or chintzes, as we now call them, because of their Chinese origin, M. Havard gives two strongly opposed designs, one which recalls in a degree the original Chinese landscape designs, with fir-trees, flowers and birds scattered about in grotesque confusion, and one after a design of Prudhon's, in which, on a background of conventional lozenges, is disposed a

broad shelf all around equally in marble, and having a channel for running water cut in it. The water fell in cascades from porcelain masks let into the marble walls. The usage of tear-bottles, collectors of antiquities will be surprised to learn, was not confined to classical times. There are some of stamped lead belonging to the Middle Ages, and due to the "Abbey of the Holy Tear" of Vendôme, where was preserved the tear shed by Christ over Lazarus. On the subject of the bed, M. Havard expatiates with evident relish, quoting Gilles Corrozet, who has many terms of endearment for it, "sweet" and "soft," "downy," "white as a swan,"

"Lict dont les draps, comme on demande,  
Sentent la rose et la lavande."

Of this much-praised piece of furniture, we are shown the curtained bed of the fifteenth century, with its little burning glass at the head to focalize the rays of the sun during the day, and so help to warm it; Jeanne

de Bourgogne's bed, of red sandal-wood, with draperies embroidered with paroquets; that of the mother of Francis I., embroidered with the bucolics of Virgil; the day bed on which the queen of Ogier, the Dane, lies and listens to her minstrels, one of whom familiarly rests his elbow on the coverlet, and that in which Lancelot gave audience, as shown in a version of the romance long anterior to Tennyson. The "loges" of the celebrated actors of the Théâtre Français, M. Got,

"Manufacture" of the national establishments of Sèvres, Gobelins, Beauvais and Vincennes. Under "Marbre" we have a colored plate, reproducing exactly the markings and colors of the precious marbles most used in interior decoration—the red marbles of Griotte and Languedoc, the black "portior" and "noir antique," the "brèche," the "brocatelle" and the Italian "turquoise." Marqueterie of all sorts, in woods and in shell and metal, are fully described and illustrated;

head of Paul Baudry, moulded after death by M. Guiton. There are mustard pots by the half dozen, the most original of which is in the shape of a barrel, with an ape standing by and grimacing as he licks his fingers. Nothing can well throw a more curious light on French luxury in the last century than the dog-hutches for pet dogs, of basket-work lined with silk, of walnut inlaid with ebony, of marquetry with ornaments in gilt bronze. Madame de Pompadour's dogs had a hutch covered with damask, and supplied within with mattresses and coverlets. Another pet animal had one in yellow Genoa damask, which might be taken apart in summer and mounted as a bedstead, with canopy and curtains fringed with silver. Still another had a chateau like a lord, with its jet d'eau and wrought grille at the entrance.

We must remark, however, that the dictionary deals only with French furniture. One will look in vain for any mention of the celebrated names of Adams, Sheraton and Chippendale, and only occasionally is anything of German or Italian make illustrated or adverted to.

THE colors of precious stones vary much. Mineralogists recognize the different kinds by their crystallization, their hardness and chemical composition, whatever their color, but lapidaries and their customers have agreed that the most desirable varieties of each gem are those in which the typical color is purest and strongest. Thus the diamond should be most transparent, the purest crystal coming next and strass after. The best strass is made with powdered rock crystal, oxide of lead, potash, borax and white oxide of arsenic. The ruby should be of a lake or carmine tone; garnet, of a dark, purplish lake; sapphire, of an ultramarine blue; chrysolite, greenish yellow; beryl, yellowish green; emerald, green; amethyst, deep violet; tourmaline, between brown and green; opal, milk white, with flame-colored and greenish-blue reflections; carnelian, a cherry red; jet, black. This last, it should be remembered, is inflammable.

#### ARTISTIC LETTERING FOR MONOGRAMS.

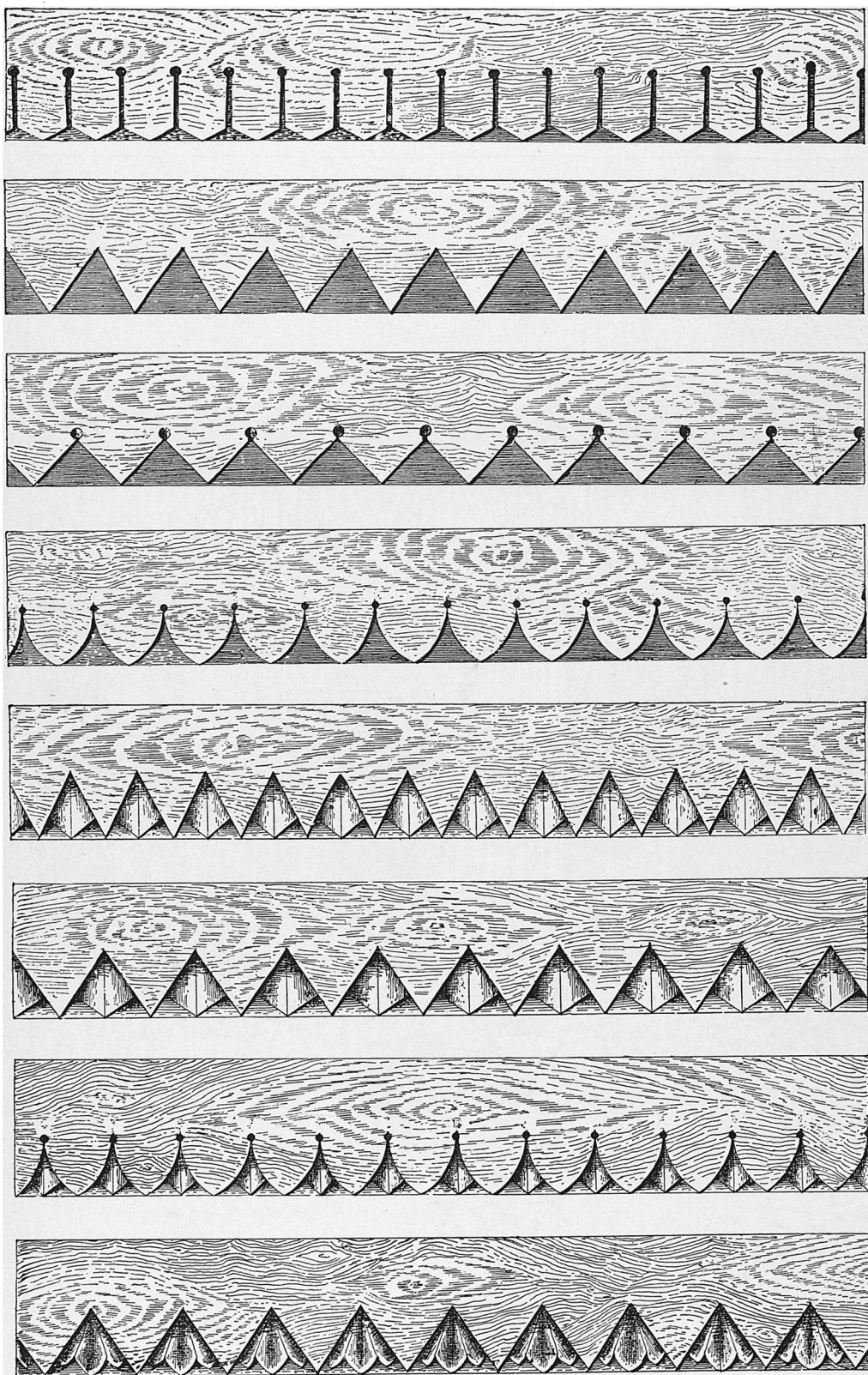
LETTERS, whether combined as monograms or used consecutively for initials, should always be expressive of utility, character or beauty—it may be the beauty of simplicity or the beauty of dignity. If the end be utility, there is nothing more satisfactory than the ordinary Roman letters, capitals and "lower case;" and while their distinctive outlines should be carefully maintained, they admit of a great variety of treatment, especially in their serifs and terminals. The legibility of the Roman forms is mainly due to the unlikeness of each letter to every other in the alphabet. This distinctness is curiously illustrated by a proposal of a French literary reformer who advocated cutting types in two, and using only the upper halves of the letters. That Roman types are readable when thus abbreviated is readily proved by placing a strip of paper over the lower half of a line of type, when it will be found that the upper half is quite decipherable. The saving to the nation in paper and ink that would yearly result from the adoption of this scheme was estimated at many millions of dollars! Nothing, however, was said of the extra cost of spectacles that would result from the general employment of a more minute and indistinct type.

For general artistic lettering there is nothing more satisfactory than the unadorned Anglo-Saxon alphabet, which differs from the Roman in the forms of C, F, H, M, N, T and W. When something more striking and original is required, then resort must be had to some such erratic modification of the alphabetic forms as is suggested in the examples on the opposite page.

Monograms admit of three different styles of lettering. First, the employment of a single line, broadened to the required degree of intensity, all crossings to be interlaced; second, the employment of a double or parallel line, inclosing a greater or less width of space, the right hand and under line to be somewhat thickened, the background to be shaded; third, the employment of a different line for each letter. Supposing there are three letters composing a monogram, the first might consist of a black line, the second of a double line, the third of a decorated line, as, for example, a double line with a line of dots running through the centre. The interlacing of three unlike lines renders the monogram more distinct and beautiful.

The examples given are the initials of the Denver Architectural Sketching Club.

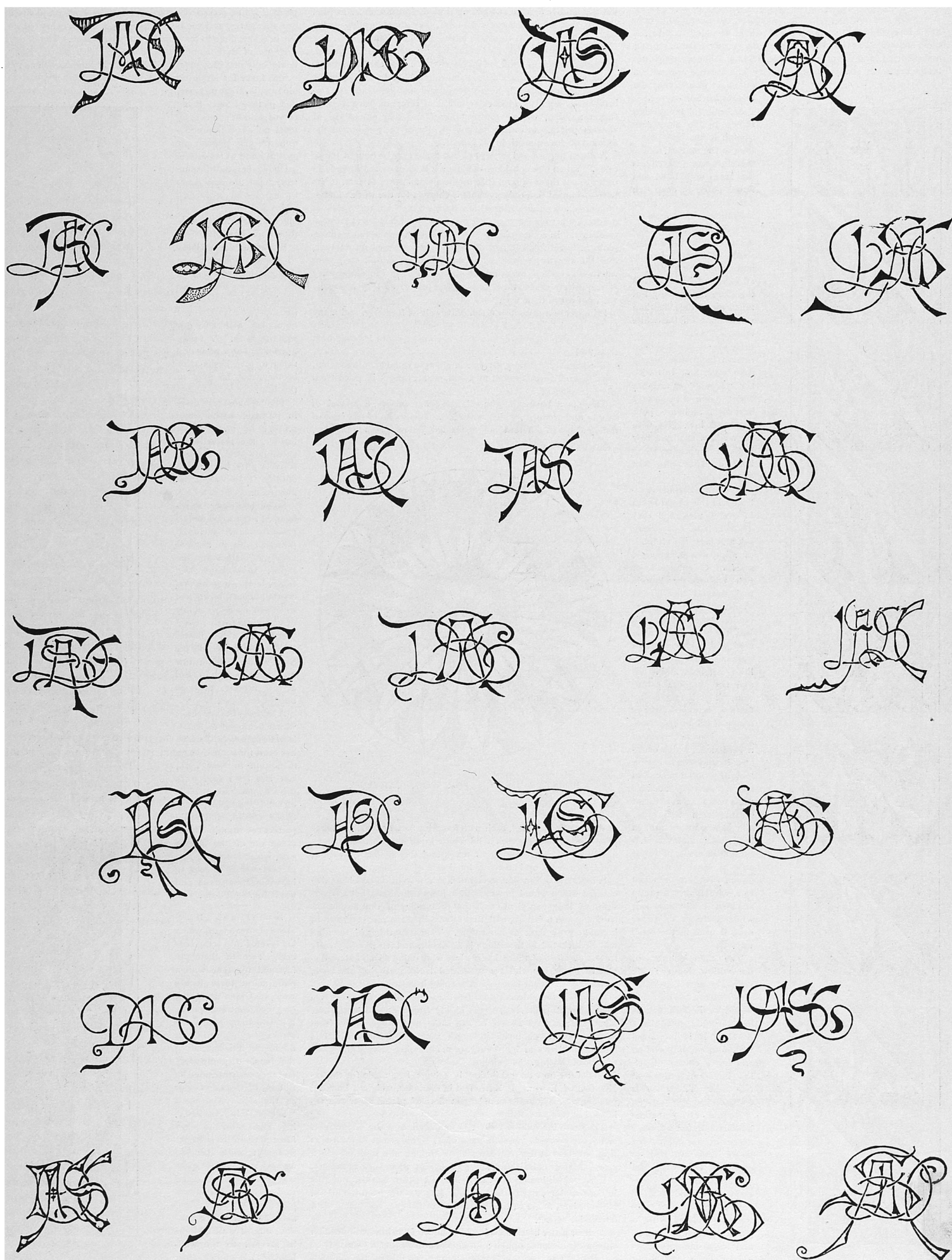
BENN PITMAN.



WOOD-CARVING DESIGNS FOR EDGES AND MOULDINGS. BY BENN PITMAN.

Mlle. Samary, Mlle. Lloyd and M. Febvre, are engraved, and show how comfortably these ladies and gentlemen install themselves while they are off the stage and waiting for their cue. That of M. Got has a Turkish etagère with a trophy of arms in the centre of each wall, a mat for dado, and an ottoman running along two sides of the room. Mlle. Lloyd's is all mirrors and pictures, and M. Febvre's is evidently filled with photographs of his friends. A full account is given under

mirrors with ivory backs, mirrors of polished steel, of crystal and of Venice glass are shown us. The name which we give to a certain kind of carpet, "Moquette," is traced to its old form, "Mosquette," and shown to be derived from the usage made by Mussulmen of small, soft carpets for saying their prayers on in their mosques. Several pages are devoted to candle snuffers and snuffer-trays, and some beautifully wrought examples are illustrated. Under "Mouillage" is given a cut of the



EXAMPLES OF ARTISTIC MONOGRAMS, BEING VARIOUS ESSAYS WITH THE INITIALS OF THE DENVER ARCHITECTURAL SKETCHING CLUB.